

structure challenges and must work with transportation users to find the most efficient means of raising this revenue.

I rise today to reintroduce the Heavy Truck Tax Fairness Act, bipartisan legislation to ease barriers to investment in new, heavy trucks. The funding sources for the Highway Trust Fund can be volatile, depending on the health of the economy. Current law places a 12% tax on the sale of new heavy trucks, trailers, and certain tractors. This tax is an important source of Highway Trust Fund revenues. In times of economic stress, these sales fall dramatically, badly limiting Trust Fund resources. These lost sales have several important effects. By reducing revenue to the Trust Fund, the decline hinders economic productivity by imposing costs from poor infrastructure. It also reflects an increase in the average age of the trucking fleet. New trucks have significant environmental and safety advantages, and Congress should reduce the barriers to new truck acquisition. To meet the demand for new trucks, most truck manufacturers will add employees, as most have significant engine and final assembly operations in the U.S.

The Heavy Truck Tax Fairness Act would replace the 12% excise tax currently levied on new truck, trailer, and certain tractor sales with an off-setting increase in the diesel fuel excise tax of \$0.064 per gallon. This modest change will ensure that the aggregate tax burden stays roughly equivalent over 10 years; it will also have the effect of smoothing the resources available to the Highway Trust Fund and ensure the U.S. can continue investing in our vital transportation infrastructure. I also note that this legislation does not affect all transportation stakeholders equally. In particular, smaller companies and owner-operators could see fewer benefits. I pledge to work with affected groups as this legislation advances to ensure that the legislation, as enacted, is as carefully tailored and broadly beneficial as possible.

HONORING AUSTIN ROPER

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Austin Roper of the Kriskville High School Wrestling team for winning the Class 2 Missouri State Wrestling Championship in the 132-pound weight class.

Mr. Roper and his coaches should be commended for all their hard work throughout the regular season and for bringing home the State title in the Class 2 132-pound weight class to his school and community. This is his third State title.

I ask that you join me in recognizing Mr. Roper for a job well done.

RECOGNIZING GEORGE DEAN CARDEN'S 60TH BIRTHDAY

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 60th birthday of George Dean Carden, a man from southwest Missouri who went from humble beginnings to becoming the largest producer of Shrine Circuses in the country.

George Carden was born on March 19, 1952 in Springfield, Missouri. It was in Springfield he was raised, staying with his grandparents as his parents traveled the country working in a circus. After a few years his parents bought a circus of their own, but this time George came along. It wasn't too long before George started his own circus company—George Carden Circus International—in 1981. Eventually, he bought out his father's circus, combined the two, and after years of hard work became one of the largest circus producers in North America. In fact, George and his father have produced the Abou Ben Adhem Shrine Circus for almost fifty years.

The circus is usually a family affair and the Cardens are no different. George's wife, Alexandra, is also involved with the circus, as are his two sons, Larry and Brett Carden. George also has a daughter, Michelle, and two grandsons, George Brett and Cash Carden. Working in the circus means a life on the road, but when it comes time to relax, George and his family spend their time on their 800-acre ranch in Hickory County, Missouri, enjoying deer hunting and fishing.

Giving back to the community is also important to George. He is a lifetime member of Abou Ben Adhem Shriners and is very active in the Shriner community, even financially supporting renovations to the Shrine Mosque. George also has a soft spot for children and has taken care of over 100,000 special and needy children over the past thirty years. For his service, George has become honorary member of many Shrine Temples.

Mr. Speaker, George is a great man and I am privileged to honor him on his 60th birthday.

HONORING BOLIVAR COUNTY HEAD START

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Bolivar County Head Start Program (BCHSP) which began as

an affiliate program under the umbrella of the Bolivar County Community Action Agency, Inc. The program was chartered on June 16, 1965 by the State of Mississippi under Governor Paul B. Johnson. Bolivar County Head Start Program is a non-profit corporation organized for the purpose of eliminating poverty and the causes thereof in Bolivar County, Mississippi.

The Association of Communities of Bolivar County began its operations the summer of 1965 and enrolled 1,308 children in seventeen centers. At its inception, the Bolivar County Head Start Program was housed in multiple buildings and churches. It began its operations the summer of 1966 with an enrollment of 1,550 children served in eight centers located throughout the county. Unfortunately, they have had to reduce the number of sites over the years due to inadequate funding.

Most recently, Bolivar County Head Start Program has made tremendous strides in its development. After years of record growth the Bolivar County Head Start Program was able to transition out of make shift facilities such as churches and old homes to mobile units stationed throughout the county. Thanks to funding from several sources they were able to build three state of the art head start centers in the communities of Rosedale, Shaw and Mound Bayou. In 2012 they added the Early Head Start Program for children 0-3 years of age and expectant mothers, increasing their total enrollment to 890 children.

It has been through strong leadership that the agency has been recognized not only throughout the State of Mississippi, but also nationwide for its performance and service provided to children, families and communities. Mr. Amzie Moore was the first Head Start Director under the Association of Communities of Bolivar County; Mr. Dick Gurnie, the first Executive Director and later Mr. Billy J. McCain was both Head Start Director and Executive Director. After Mr. McCain's untimely departure in 2009, the charge was passed on to Mr. Adolph Hilliard to continue the agency legacy. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Hilliard retired, Mrs. Elnora Littleton was appointed the interim Executive Director. Mrs. Littleton is currently serving as the first African American female to head the Bolivar County Head Start Program.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Bolivar County Head Start for its outstanding commitment to improving the lives of children and families throughout Bolivar County, Mississippi.